THE DICKENSIAN

A Magazine for Dickens Lovers
and Monthly Record of the Dickens Fellowship

VOL. IV. DECEMBER, 1908. No. 12.

WHEN FOUND—

THE present number of *The Dickensian* completes the fourth volume, and we beg to offer our best thanks to contributors who have assisted us to make this possible. No magazine, we venture to assert, is so served as regards its articles and pictures, and as long as there is a demand for it, there is no reason to doubt that its pages can be filled with interesting matter and illustrations for a long time to come. The possibility of making it a valuable storehouse of Dickensiana was recognised at the very outset of its career, and we feel sure anyone glancing through the past volumes will agree with us that this has been realised, thanks to the co-operation of enthusiastic students and readers of the novelist. One of the most interesting features in the past has been the reproductions of cover designs, and although there are still a few more, we do not know of a sufficient number to carry us through the New Year, and so we shall continue to reproduce those available as frontispieces occasionally. The new feature on the covers for 1909 will be a chronological series of portraits, which, as in the case of the cover designs, will be worthy of preservation at the end of the volume when completed.

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In the course of an interesting address delivered last month by Mr. Bernard Shaw, at Liverpool, on books and art, an extract from which appears on another page, he said, "One of the greatest writers England ever produced was Charles Dickens, who had not yet been half enough read. One of the greatest books ever written in the English language was called *Little Dorrit.*" We are glad to have this opinion stated by such a leading critic as Mr. Shaw, for it may send readers to one of Dickens's books which, for some reason or other, is more or less neglected. It is difficult to tell why, unless for the simple reason that tastes differ. But those who admire their Dickens from the standpoint of how great are *David Copperfield*, *Martin Chuzzlewit*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, and *A Christmas Carol*, do not realise that *Little Dorrit* is a great book too for other reasons than those which place the earlier stories in that category. *The Haunted Man* is another of Dickens's books which is often neglected. Yet, to some of us, it is the cleverest of his five Christmas tales.

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During the recent pilgrimage of Dickensians to Alpine Dickensland a pleasant little ceremony took place in the Villa Rosemont, Lausanne. Mrs. Wellington Gray, the senior lady Dickensian

present, hung on the wall of the room which Dickens used as a study, a framed portrait of the novelist, presented by Mr. Arthur Humphreys, the Hon. Secretary of the Manchester Branch, who was in charge of the party. Among the places visited by the pilgrims were Geneva, Chillon, the Great St. Bernard Hospice (described by Dickens in *Little Dorrit*), and Chamonix.

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The Dickens Fellowship Dramatic Society will play an entirely new version of *The Cricket on the Hearth* at the Cripplegate Theatre, on Tuesday, December 22nd, at 8 p.m. Mr. William Shore is the adapter, and the piece will be produced under the title of "Dot." Many of the old favourites will be in the cast. Reserved seats, 5s. and 2s. 6d.; unreserved, 1s. Children will be admitted at half-price to reserved seats. Application for tickets should be made at once to Mr. Walter Dexter, the Hon. Secretary, 40, Ommanney Road, New Cross, S.E. The Cripplegate Theatre is easily accessible from all parts of London and the suburbs.

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Mr. and Mrs. H. Snowden Ward are to sail by the "Saxonia" on December 1st for a three months' lecture tour in the United States and Canada. One of their most popular subjects is "The Real Dickens Land," which has been given twice at Headquarters meetings of The Dickens Fellowship, and they expect to influence the formation of new American branches of the Fellowship, as well as to meet members of several of the existing ones. Mr. and Mrs. Ward, who have already made several lecture tours in America, will have the best wishes of all Dickensians for a safe and enjoyable voyage and a successful tour.

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The first part of "Charles Dickens and his Friends," by W. Teignmouth Shore, has reached us, and is excellently produced. It is printed upon good paper, in readable type, and is well illustrated by portraits and other pictures. We shall reserve dealing with the text until it is complete, but we must express grave doubts as to the authenticity of the inscription under the picture entitled "The Duet," for more than one reason. For instance, on what authority is it assumed that Dickens and Tennyson were friends before Mary Hogarth died in 1837? And how strange the dog, given to Dickens in America several years after Mary Hogarth's death, should be there also!

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The January meeting of the Fellowship takes place at Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, on January 6th, when Mr. Langton Johnson will give a series of Dickens recitals. Tickets for non-members may be obtained of the Hon. General Secretary, price sixpence each.

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"Many merry Christmases, many Happy New Years, unbroken friendships, great accumulation of cheerful recollections, affection on earth, and Heaven at last for all of us" is the hearty wish of

THE EDITOR.

"THE MILLER AND HIS MEN"

A REMINISCENCE

By PERCY FITZGERALD

HERE is a sort of trifle relating to Dickens which to me illustrates in a very striking way that geniality and simplicity which adorned his natural and unspoiled character. Boz always took an intense delight in the humours of the stage and in the absurdities, exaggerations and grotesqueness that reigned in his own childish days; yet, though he laughed at them, he loved them all the time. And who knew them so well? Every one "who knows" has revelled in the Crummles scenes at Portsmouth—the most perfect presentment of stage life ever given—also the most amusing; we are lost in admiration at the roundness, the life, the perfect finish and truth of such beings as Folair and Lenville.

There was an old melodrama of which Dickens was fond of talking—"The Miller and his Men." He dwelt on it with an affectionate interest. We knew it by heart, every word of it; he had got it up at school, so had we. To me it ever seemed deliciously romantic, a drama of absorbing interest. The notion of the robbers posing as harmless, well-floured millers, so as to carry on their dishonest pursuits, was fascinating. How fondly I used to look back to the innocent mill (music by Bishop), the combats, the love business, the comic countryman, the desperate encounters when the bandits were driven to bay and had to throw off the mask. And at the close, when the mill was blown up! I can say with truth that all this and infinitely more was passing through Boz's mind and was cherished by him. He delighted in calling back all his youthful pictures, which seemed to him more dramatic and suggestive than the more brilliant business of actual life. This always seemed to me to furnish a key to his infinitely interesting character. Simple and genuine things—images, dreams—were what pleased him. And as in this "Miller and his Men" memory I seemed to have followed his own actual train of thought, he was pleased at this bit of sympathy, and so the subject again and again recurred. Anyone familiar with the old *Household Words* will recall the many allusions to this old play. There are papers headed "The Miller and his Men," "When the wind blows," "Grindoff," but referring only to those marauders by way of metaphor; just as with those allusions to blacking always recurring in his stories, made because it pleased him to keep before his thoughts that strange and curious secret. This good old crusted piece was produced so far back as 1811, written by a certain Isaac Pocock, but it was revived in 1835, just as Boz was devoting himself to the stage. It was thus that he ever thought fondly of and cherished all the varied images of that happy time. Again, how ready he was, when some antique, absurd song in which our fathers delighted was quoted, to take up the strain, to answer the cue with corresponding solemnity. As with the "All's well" chant. The words "All—all's well!" "in slow and sad *thirds*," the two joining in "all's well!" I recognised this lilt in one of his books.

Sometimes, a merry twinkle in his eye, he would strike off with the words of the gloomy peasant, with which the piece opens, "More sacks to the mill!" But, indeed, he knew it all by heart, and never failed. The music, how quaint and pleasant it was! "When the wind blows, then the mill goes," by the excellent Bishop. No doubt all these things seemed very absurd to him, and yet he cherished them.

It came to pass that one of his own most capable henchmen, "Jack Hollingshead," had taken, I think, Drury Lane Theatre, and had conceived the very disastrous idea of refuting the notion that all the old plays were good. This he did by reproducing them under absurd conditions. These foolish exhibitions "Jack" advertised regularly as "Palmy-day revivals," an allusion to the constantly quoted "palmy days of the British drama," supposed to be gone for ever. He wished to convince his playgoers that they were but poor things. He forgot, however, the indifferent acting, the complete ignorance of the traditions, the total want of sympathy both in actors and audiences. With this view he dug up all kinds of venerable comedies and dramas—"George Barnwell," "Venice Preserved," "The Gamester," and the like.

One day while the facetious "Jack" was indulging in these freaks, which were costly enough, I received a joyous letter from Boz, something to this effect: "What do you think? Hollingshead is putting up our good old friend, 'The Miller and his Men'! We positively *must* see it. Fix your own night," &c. "Come!" Need I say that I was as pleased as he was?

In his enthusiastic fashion he looked on the resurrection as something quite providential. It was to be a regular "night out." But first—for he was ever hospitable, and thought everything incomplete without *his* hospitality—there must be the prefatory dinner. The good old "Albion," then facing Drury Lane Theatre, was to be the place. How appropriate he thought this tavern for the primitive play! And so we repaired to the Albion in the greatest spirits. I see ourselves that night seated in one of the "boxes," or eating pews. Some familiar, semi-Bohemian followers of the old times came up obsequiously and yet familiarly, to be received by him in his own genial, cordial way. For he never changed to anyone. He was ever cordial to the humbler fry of his profession, and not only cordial, but hearty and jovial. We then crossed to Drury Lane Theatre, and were duly installed in a good box. The heavy folds of the old green curtain rolled up slowly, and there were seen the millers bending under their burdens, toiling up the steep towards their mill.

How merrily his eye twinkled as he murmured with Grindoff, "More sacks to the mill!" Then came the glee, "When the wind blows, then the mill goes," to Bishop's old-fashioned strains, execrably performed, as, indeed, was the whole. The players and their diction were exaggerated, the old-fashioned spectacles became a burlesque. Alas! the disillusion worked slowly and surely. The whole was stupid, dull, and heavy to a degree, so at last, about the second Act, Boz arose slowly and sadly, and said "he could

stand it no longer." I really think he was grieved at having his old idol shattered, and perhaps was mortified.

But he presently rallied. There was the little bachelor haunt, 26, Wellington Street, the office, where there was to be more eating and drinking to wind up the night. We must "drown it in the bowl" (extract from another romantic melodrama, "The Castle of Andalusia," also full of bandits and caves, and which he introduced into the Muggleton dinner).

"The glasses sparkle on the board,
The wine is ruby bright."

As I said at starting, all this is only a triviality; but it goes deep. It is a trait of character, and shows how Boz, unspoiled by his tumultuous success, could still satisfy himself with these pleasures of the commonest simple life. I really believe the case was this. He knew very few, if any at all, who were "up" in these old romantic allusions, or sympathetic with them. He found with pleasure that there was one at least who did, and was responsive. How few there are who can see below the printed characters of his stories, and, putting a finger here or there, can say, "I know what *that* means. I have heard him say that. That was one of his little hobbies."

This little speculation may seem trifling enough, but it has a deep significance, for it really forms a portion of Dickens's precious treasury of childish memories which he cherished all through his life. When he was at the Wellington House Academy I find he got up this very "Miller and his Men" in a sort of toy theatre. His fellow pupil, Dr. Danson, tells us how it was given in a very gorgeous form. "Master Beverley constructed the mill for us in such a way that it could tumble to pieces with the assistance of crackers. At one performance the explosion connected with the blowing up of the mill was so loud that the police came knocking at the door." So, forty years later, when the magic name was mentioned these little scenes came back to him—his old school, the mill, his fellow-actors, his management, the explosion—and now here am I, after fifty years more, recalling the talk with him.

DICKENS'S LONDON

IT was a good idea to collect the passages from the works of Dickens describing various aspects of London and its ways, and Mr. Norman J. Davidson has accomplished his task excellently well, and his publishers have issued the result of his labours in a very dainty little book entitled "Vignettes of London Life from Charles Dickens."* The extracts are divided into several parts under such headings as "Coaches," "Inns," "Law Courts," "Chambers and Lodgings," "City Churches," "The West End," "The River," &c., so that the book will be found useful for reference purposes. The pages are embellished with some neat little pictures reduced from the familiar Phiz drawings, whilst a delightful illustration of David Copperfield's arrival in London, drawn by H. M. Brock, is reproduced in colour as a frontispiece.

* London: Seeley & Co., Ltd. 1s. 6d. net.

DICKENS AND FIELD LANE RAGGED SCHOOLS

By O. SACK

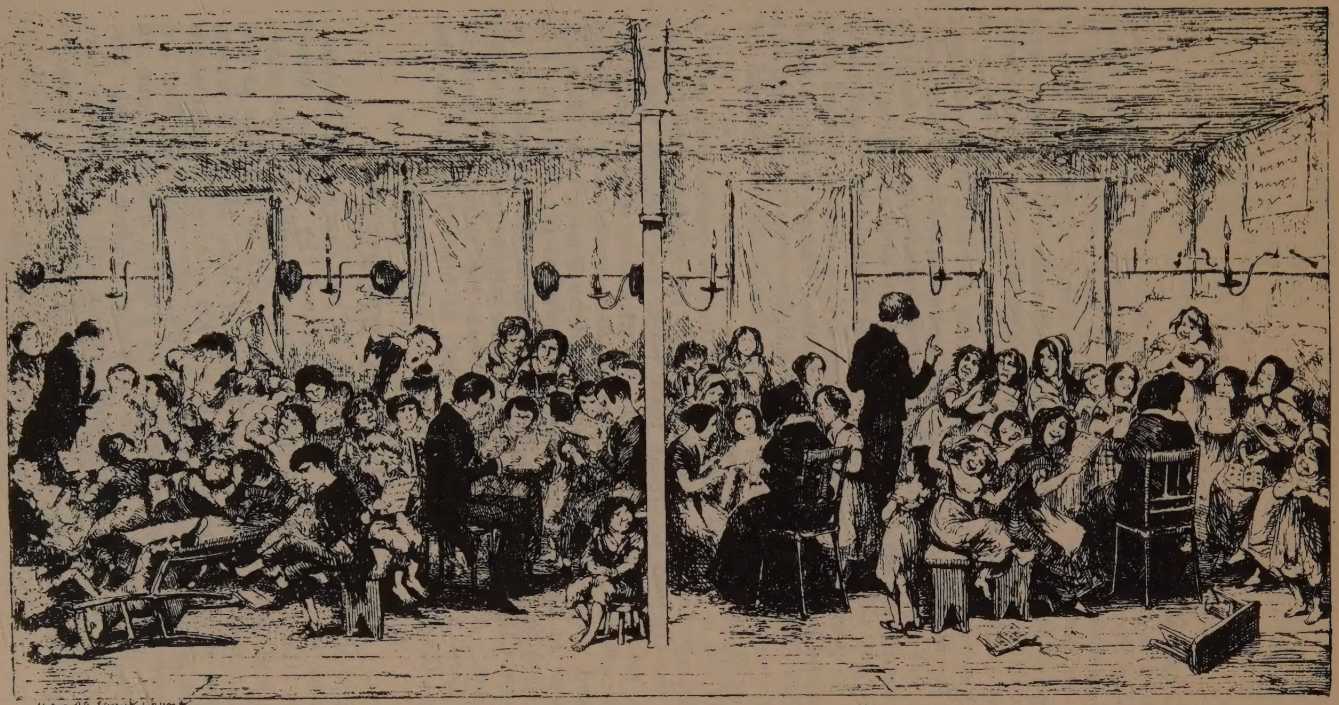
ONE need not, in the pages of this magazine, dwell upon the fact that one of the things that was always uppermost in the mind of Charles Dickens was the welfare of the poor. He strove through all his books to show that the poor and unfortunate were the one class of the community which wanted, above all others, the sympathy of brotherhood, and he always wrote of them, not as a race of Hottentots as has been suggested others write of them to-day, but as units in this huge English community, this great brotherhood. And Dickens did not merely write about these things, as one reviews a book nowadays and puts on the shelf, to turn only to another. He followed the matter up and set about seeking how the wrongs which existed could be righted.

To educate the people, the ignorant, that was his panacea for the prevention of crime, and when an opportunity arose for expressing those views, or for helping to put into execution the views expressed, he never lost it.

Such a theme as this could be enlarged upon to a great extent, if space permitted. But just at this moment Field Lane Institution which had Dickens's sympathy, and for which he appealed, is in sore need of help, and a word or two concerning his connexion with it may be acceptable and helpful.

In 1843 he had become interested in the object and work of this school, and, in a letter to Forster, said that he had "sent Miss Coutts a sledge-hammer account of the Ragged Schools, and as I saw her name for two hundred pounds in the clergy subscription list, I took pains to show her that religious mysteries and difficult creeds would not do for such pupils. I told her, too, that it was of immense importance they should be *washed*. She writes back to know what the rent of some large premises would be, and what the expense of erecting a regular bathing and purifying place; touching which points I am in correspondence with the authorities." From this time he became deeply interested in the matter, and helped along the institution in conjunction with her and Lord Shaftesbury. At the close of the year he offered an article to the *Edinburgh Review* on the subject, but it was declined, because, as Dickens thought would be the case, he took "grounds against the Church Catechism and other mere formularies and subtleties in reference to the education of the young and ignorant."

The work went on, and we find him still keenly interested, and writing a letter to *The Daily News* on the subject on February 4th, 1846. He had seen an advertisement in its pages of a lecture which was about to be given in order to attract the attention of the public, and in this letter he sets forth his views on the Ragged Schools, and gives an account of a visit he paid to the school in Field Lane and West Street, Saffron Hill. He points out what the objects of these schools were, and then describes what he saw there. He did not praise the system pursued, nor did he altogether approve of the details of that system for certain reasons. But the general and broad object of them appealed to him strongly, and he promised to refer to



The RAGGED SCHOOL.
In West Street (late Chick Lane) Smithfield.

Drawn by George Cruikshank about 1843-4.

the matter again. This he did in 1852, in the pages of *Household Words*, in an article entitled "A Sleep to Startle Us." This and the letter referred to above are included in the volume of his writings just published under the title of "Miscellaneous Papers," and readers interested will, no doubt, turn to them and read them in their entirety. In "A Sleep to Startle Us" he describes his second visit to the Ragged Schools.

"I found my first Ragged School," he says, "in an obscure place called West Street, Saffron Hill, pitifully struggling for life under every disadvantage. It had no means, it had no suitable rooms, it derived no power or protection from being recognised by any authority; it attracted within its wretched walls a fluctuating swarm of faces—young in years but youthful in nothing else—that scowled Hope out of countenance. It was held in a low-roofed den, in a sickening atmosphere, in the midst of taint, and dirt, and pestilence; with all the deadly sins let loose, howling and shrieking at the doors. Zeal did not supply the place of method and training; the teachers knew little of their office; the pupils, with an evil sharpness, found them out, got the better of them, derided them, made blasphemous answers to Scriptural questions, sang, fought, danced, robbed each other, seemed possessed by legions of devils. The place was stormed and carried over and over again; the lights were blown out, the books strewn in the gutters, and the female scholars carried off triumphantly to their old wickedness."

This is not a pleasant picture. But Dickens proceeds to give a fuller glimpse of what went on inside, how the scholars were taught, and how the teachers set about their work, and suggests how good might be made to accrue from it. Sometimes he is pathetic, sometimes humorous, but always practical and sensible. It is a long article, and many of the sentiments in it have point now, although the methods in use then are totally different to-day. This work is being carried on under an improved system at the present time in Vine Street, Clerkenwell Road. But funds are urgently needed for the purpose. At this time of year, when the spirit of "goodwill towards men" is more thought of than at other times, it may be hoped that the help that is needed will be forthcoming.

TWO CHRISTMAS STORIES *

THIS is a new edition in one volume of two charming Christmas stories of Dickens's, and illustrated by George Alfred Williams. Last year Mr. Williams was responsible for two other volumes, and was more successful in those than he seems to us this year. The portraits of Master Harry, of Mrs. Harry Walmers, Junr., and of Cobbs are excellent, and his coloured frontispiece is good from an artistic point of view. But Mr. Williams does not seem to have caught the atmosphere of English life or of our old inns. His line work, too, is scratchy. After reading Mr. Williams's introduction to the book dealing with artists who have failed in certain particulars in illustrating Dickens, one expected something better from his pencil.

* London: Cassell & Co., Ltd. 6s. net.

DICKENS OFF THE FUNKS *

In imitation of (and a long way after) Bret Harte

Among the shrouds the wind was loudly moaning,
The billows surged around;
And icebergs, through the drift and darkness looming,
Sent forth a rumbling sound.

The flickering oil-lamp fitful shadows casting
On many an unshorn face;
And wearied forms, grown lean from erstwhile fasting,
Lolling about the place.

And such a place; here "sculps" of seals lay welt'ring,
And there the men at rest;
And through the air a seal fat scent was filt'ring:
A filthy hole at best.

Till one arose and from his bag's poor filling
A well-thumbed Dickens took;
All noise was stopped: they showed that they were willing
To hear once more the book.

Then gathered round him a motley assembly;
With pathos, he began
And read again the tale of "Little Em'ly,"
Of "Peggotty" and "Ham."

The watch on deck stopped their monotonous treading,
And through the hatchway leant;
And listening, cared not how the ship was heading,
But on the tale intent.

And while he read, their worries all forsook them,
Their cares they all forgot;
He on the Downs and English sea-coast took them:
They shared with Ham his lot.

They saw Ham's boat-hut girt around with willows;
They strolled along the sands;
And in the lifeboat, o'er the surging billows,
They strove with hearts and hands.

. . . . . .

Gone is that ship, the crew now all are scattered,
But still they love the tale;
And if the heart that penned it could be flattered,
Such homage could not fail.

Gone is that ship, but not the reader's story,
For that will live for aye;
And ever deck the Master's head with glory,
His genius e'er portray.

Where Western pine, and British oak and holly,
Wreathe round his funeral urn,
"Deem it not all a too presumptuous folly,"
This Terra Novean Fern. "Ninguno."

From the *Newfoundland Illustrated Tribune*, Christmas, 1907.

* Funk-Islets, off Bonavista, where the sealing steamers often strike the "Main Patch" of seals.

THE STYLE OF DICKENS

By WILLOUGHBY MATCHETT

"PROSE has no right to be anything but prose," said Mr. Ley in the October number, anent a certain occasional Wegg-like dropping into poetry (or, rather, blank verse) on the part of Dickens. Perhaps not. I have no desire to break a lance with Mr. Ley on the subject; he has the whole consensus of modern literary opinion at his back in regarding this as a weakness in the novelist's style, and yet I would like to put in a word for Dickens, too.

In the first place I feel half inclined to assert that, apart from passages of simple narration, and the lighter portions of him, Dickens did not write prose at all: which—as he might have said himself—is a bold word. But neither the rhythm of the essayist's hammered-out elegance, nor the rhythm of the historian's high-sounding periods, nor any other such subtle harmony was that of Dickens. His appeal was primal and direct, and his harmony was in keeping with it—pronounced and popular. This, his serious writing, might be prose in a material, technical sense, but it was not so in spirit. We might call it prose-poetry, for it was prose informed with a strong feeling for poetry, and that of a simple, semi-emotional character.

I speak of his writing, but really much that he gave us seems more in the nature of an outpouring rather than toilsome desk work. His style was such a personal matter, such an expression of the man himself, that one seeks to light on a word less cold to represent it. Style, as a rule, suggests so much that is artificial, a formal, academic thing foreign to a man himself, but which, by much striving—by playing the sedulous ape as Stevenson has it—he may hope to acquire, and even, by practice, to bring into some state of coalescence with his own nature. It is the great glory of Dickens that from the first he let the spirit that animated him find free expression in the language most natural to his temperament; the only formative influence being those literary forefathers of his, beaming kindly from Olympus—Fielding and his *confrères*. Stylist—which as a word is several degrees icier than style, implying as it does a certain laboured preciosity—Dickens was as far from being as possibly could be. The feature of his way of writing was its simplicity—a great, ennobling simplicity that is carried to distinction by the moral worth, the ideality and poetic feeling of the man behind it. Had he bent his nature in his youth to an academic yoke no doubt he would still have written great things, but he would scarcely have been the Dickens that we know.

Yet the primary hold that Dickens has over the reader is not simplicity of style exactly: neither is it his humour, nor his sentiment, nor his extraordinary vision: it is, rather, the bare, compelling power of words, which a natural gift for language, a copiousness of utterance of high order, make doubly insistent. The magic of words for the sake of words is in fact the primary hold of all authors. But to keep up the magic the words must

be intensified by a fire or fervour from within. Spells cast over enraptured listeners by seer-like bards were, in all probability, common in the dim beginnings of literature. The matter would be of second-rate importance, the fervid utterance, the accompanying music all-paramount. Hypnotic suggestion, too, would be in the rise and fall of the long outpourings, when the fire of the voice came somewhat to lose itself in chanted cadences. An echo of these dim beginnings is in Dickens.

Elemental, again, is the note sounding clear and high through his writings, that woke up the world of literature. His natural spontaneity of expression, voicing the glorious, primal effect of things upon his vision, revelling, in fact, in such effect, holds in essence all the rich sensation and native eloquence of barbaric man brought for the first time in contact with the wonders of civilised life. These are things which, sublimated as they are in Dickens, transcend all literary art.

The well-known writer on the South Sea Islands, Miss Beatrice Grimshaw, relates how, having arrived at a village in the far interior of Fiji, she bathed in the river there the next morning, and that, while she swam, the native women of the place, unused to white members of their sex, sat on the banks, and, beating time with a slapping of hands on the rocks, improvised a chant or chorus of a humming, monotonous character, in eulogy of the bather's many wonders and virtues, her beautiful swimming-dress, her garments generally, her remote ancestors, her rich possession of tinned meats and biscuits, in fact everything they could think to bring in. Here we have a fresh, child-of-nature outlook akin to that elemental one of Dickens: a force and picturesqueness, too, such as are the basis of his own forceful and picturesque descriptive style. Let me emphasise *basis*, for of course there is superadded the whole genius of the man.

Like these Fijians, too, does not Dickens do a good deal of beating time with his hands, or rather his pen—shall we not own it?—in those semi-poetic parts of his, for is there not heard in them a sort of musical undertone—shall we say a monotonous humming even?—that holds the reader, apart from the sense and energy of the sentences, and is something over and above the primary magic of words? In this, and in his fondness for stringing adjectives together, and in his frequent reiteration of words and phrases, does one not see something of the method of the chant? And if an example be called for, let us cull one from *The Haunted Man*. That passage, starting:—

"You should have seen him in his dwelling about twilight, in the dead winter time.

"When the wind was blowing——" etc., and in cold blood let us count—if we have it in us to do so—the sentences that follow, all beginning with a "When."

Then, again, does Dickens not have in a sublimated degree the large joyousness that prompts to the Fijian singing, the exuberance, the spilling over of feeling, the gift of speech free and unrestrained? He, too, has a deep delight in—if not exactly

eulogising—glorifying your wonders and virtues, not to speak of your foibles, by the bare act of describing them. He finds a joy in your hat and boots, and—supposing you to be a gentleman—will sing a pæan on your waistcoat and inexpressibles. Like the Fijian, he finds no detail of you insignificant. He, too, will sound the praises of your tinned meat and biscuit, supposing you to have them, or shall we say, rather, your boiled leg of mutton and caper sauce? But he has this overwhelming superiority over the Fijian, that, first of all, you and your belongings are things of his imagination.

Such poetic or song-like prose then being largely the natural method of Dickens, it follows that those few passages which may be printed as blank verse are only that natural method pushed to an extreme. The welling-up of deep emotion when dealing with such a subject as the death of Little Nell almost demanded some such vent. It was a mere matter of temperament, and in this Charles Dickens ought to be taken as a law unto himself. No such highly wrought sensibility had existed among those who, before him, had gone to shape English prose, or has existed since, and therefore any arbitrary ruling laid down by these more phlegmatic natures is as nought in its application to him. This tendency towards blank verse was known to Dickens himself, but it did not trouble him, for he probably recognised that it was a thing of his nature. Viewed from the academic point of impersonal prose it is no doubt a blemish, viewed from the point of personal expression it seems legitimate. It has the human touch in it, and that goes for a lot.

DICKENS CALENDARS, &c.

MESSRS. RAPHAEL TUCK & SONS have sent us their usual parcel containing their excellent series of Dickens calendars for the New Year. The art portfolio comprises a selection of Ludovici's now famous pictures printed in a delicate brown ink, each of which is worthy a suitable frame. There are two block calendars, one with a coloured picture of Mr. Pecksniff and Old Martin Chuzzlewit, the former in the act of delivering himself of "Truth prevails, and virtue is triumphant"; the other depicting a scene, in black and white, in the Marshalsea, with Little Dorrit, her father, and Arthur Clennam. Both pictures are by Harold Copping, perhaps the best of our present-day illustrators of the novelist. He also is responsible for "David Copperfield and the Waiter," a delightful picture in colours on a hanging calendar. Mr. Fletcher Watson's pictures are made to do service once more on other and cheaper calendars. May we suggest to Messrs. Tuck that that service has been an honourable one, and merits pensioning off, and so give place to fresh blood? Included in the parcel are copies of "The Dickens Birthday Book," in cloth and leather binding, at 1s. and 2s. 6d. each respectively. They are tastefully produced, but we are again confronted with Mr. Fletcher Watson's pictures.

CHARLES DICKENS AND "LITTLE DORRIT"

By GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

AN interesting address was delivered at Liverpool, last month, by Mr. George Bernard Shaw, on books and art.

Literature, he said, might do the most frightful harm or it might do enormous good. There was nothing more alarming than the extent to which merely romantic reading had suddenly turned this nation, which used to be rather a stolid nation, into a romantic nation. We were becoming hysterical as a consequence. Letters which were read at trials in the law courts were all obviously copied from the trashy novel. (Laughter.) It was most important that the author should be original—and that whatever he said should be taken from life, not from books. He should be sure he was dealing with facts, and not with romance. He should accept nothing as a foregone conclusion. There should be no foregone conclusions as to morality, religion, art, or anything else. Nothing was so dangerous as a foregone conclusion. Now-a-days, whenever a book or a play was full of foregone conclusions of a sufficiently unpleasant kind, it was called a problem book or a problem play. (Laughter.) Speaking of style and the influence great writers had on those who followed them, Mr. Shaw contrasted Dickens and Ruskin. He owned himself to be a pupil, a scholar of Charles Dickens. He had been one of the chief literary influences of his youth. Many people told him they could not read Dickens, but his own position was that, because he could always read Dickens's books, he had to keep out of their way to escape wasting his time. One of the greatest writers England had ever produced was Charles Dickens, who had not yet been half enough read. One of the greatest books ever written in the English language was called *Little Dorrit*, and as soon as Englishmen realised that *Little Dorrit* was true there would be a revolution. It was because he had read *Little Dorrit* when he was a small boy that he was a revolutionist himself. But when Dickens was compared with Ruskin it was immediately obvious what a Philistine Dickens was, and how amazingly ignorant he was of the wonderful wealth of communication between the great artist and the man of the ordinary mind. That, of course, had been a serious handicap to Dickens. Ruskin was a man of culture, because his father, being an English wine merchant, and, consequently, a man of wealth, had great opportunities of developing the artistic side of his nature. It would be a good thing if the children could be frequently turned out of the schools, where their lessons often bored them, and taken to the Art Gallery, where they could be talked to by somebody who would make the pictures interesting. Liverpool had its picture gallery. So far so good. It ought also to have its public orchestra, which would play the symphonies of Beethoven and Mozart, Richard Strauss, and all the moderns. It was only in this way that the future Dickenses would grow up with the culture of Ruskin in addition to their own genius.

Mr. Shaw went on to speak of a much misunderstood writer named Shakespeare, then of the rediscovery of the Bible as literature, and, finally, of the splendid amount of literary talent existing to-day.

THE NATIONAL DICKENS LIBRARY

By J. W. T. LEY

VI

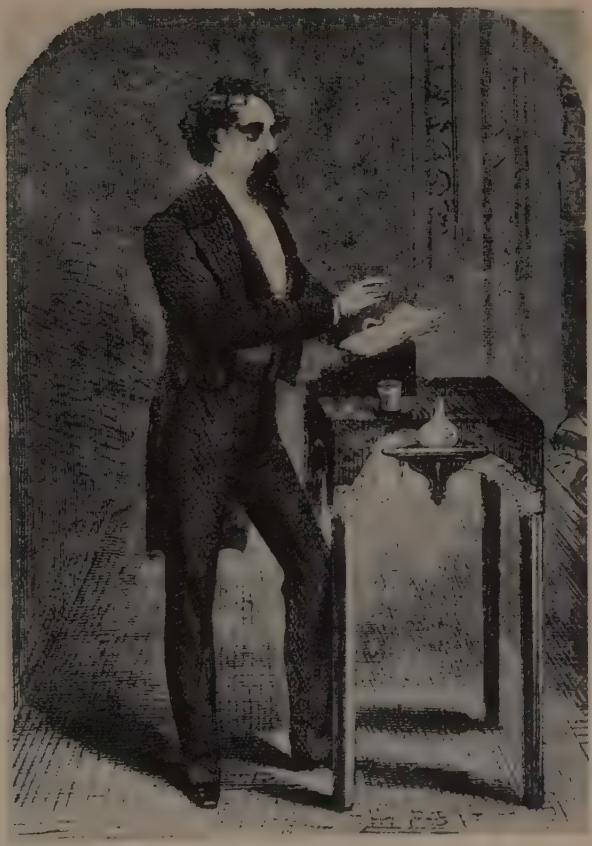
PORTRAITS

IN a concluding article, for our space is limited, I shall be able only to deal very briefly with the 247 portraits of Charles Dickens that are in the Library. This collection is absolutely unique, and, in the view of many, the most interesting and the most valuable section of the National Dickens Library. They present to us the novelist as he appeared at almost all ages from youth to death, the last in the series being a photograph of the bust modelled by Thomas Woolner, R.A., from the death mask. Of course, several are what Mr. Kitton, in "Dickens and his Illustrators," described as "assumed portraits," but these have their interest, for they are all illustrative of some red-letter time in the novelist's life. The first four in the collection (the portraits are numbered in chronological order as far as possible) belong to this category. The inclusion of the very first may be considered by some to be rather straining a point. It is a reproduction of Phiz's illustration to *David Copperfield*—"My magnificent order at the public house." It is true that in introducing this incident into the novel Dickens was reproducing an actual incident in his own life, but to describe the illustration as a portrait of Dickens may be considered by some to be scarcely justifiable. The other three are more legitimately included. One is Fred Barnard's well-known illustration to the "Household Edition" of Forster's "Life of Charles Dickens," entitled "Little Charles Dickens at the Blacking Factory"; the next is the same author's picture of "Charles Dickens as a Schoolboy," drawn for the same edition of the same book: and the remaining one is an illustration from "Clever Boys," entitled "Charles Dickens placing his First Contribution in the Editor's Box."

The earliest authentic portrait in the collection is a reproduction of a pencil sketch by George Cruikshank, and the next one is Samuel Laurence's famous crayon portrait, the original of which was in the Pickwick Exhibition last year. And as we examine these portraits, as well as those by Maclise and other prominent men, all executed at the time when the youthful author was in the first flush of his success, the words of Thackeray come to mind. Referring to Maclise's painting of Boz, in 1839, he wrote: "What cheerful intellectuality is about the man's eyes, and a large forehead! If Monsieur de Balzac, that voluminous physiognomist, could examine this head he would no doubt interpret every line and wrinkle in it—the nose firm and well placed, the nostrils wide and full, as are the nostrils of all men of genius (this is Monsieur de Balzac's maxim). The past and the future, says Jean Paul, are written in every countenance. I think we may promise ourselves a brilliant future for this one." And if we examine any of these early portraits we find the same characteristics—"the smile sweet and generous," "the nose firm and well placed," and in the eyes

a "wonderful fire and beauty"—we find, in short, a handsome, vivacious, intellectual face.

It is surprising to find quite a large number of illustrations for Dickens's books in this collection, and to know that in each of these Boz appears in the guise of one of his own characters. We all know, of course, that Cruikshank was fond of introducing his own



DICKENS GIVING ONE OF HIS PUBLIC READINGS

and his author's portraits into his drawings, yet in this collection, curiously enough, we do not find the best-known instance—the Charity Dinner, from *Sketches by Boz*, showing not only the artist and the author, but the publishers as well. Phiz's drawing for the "Master Humphrey's Clock" prospectus, showing Dickens opening the door of the clock case, is here. There are several groups of Dickens with members of his family or with his friends. The earliest is Fred Barnard's drawing of Dickens and Forster standing

in the doorway of Jack Straw's Castle. Then comes a reproduction of Maclise's drawing, that is so familiar to every Dickensian, of Boz reading the *Chimes* to his friends at Forster's house. One of the most interesting in this category is number 29, depicting Dickens, Maclise, Forster, and Stanfield on their tour in Cornwall. The original of this is in the Forster collection, at South Kensington, and Mr. Kitton, in the supplement to "Charles Dickens by Pen and Pencil," attributed it unhesitatingly to Thackeray. From *Reynolds' Miscellany*, 1847, we have a portrait group of Dickens, Lytton, and Harrison Ainsworth. Another group of peculiar interest is one taken on the lawn outside Albert Smith's house on the occasion of a performance of "The Frozen Deep," whilst a curiosity is a palpably "manufactured" group comprising Dickens, Thackeray, Lytton, Carlyle, Macaulay, Wilkie Collins, J. A. Froude, and George Macdonald. It is a clever production, and the portrait of Dickens is an admirable one.

Of later photographs there is a large number, and between many the differences are almost imperceptible. For instance, there is a set of six showing Dickens seated at his desk writing, all taken at one sitting by Watkins, all very much alike, yet each different from the others. Again, there are numerous pictures (most of them newspaper illustrations) of the novelist at his reading desk, and of memorial portraits published in 1870, generally showing Dickens surrounded by some of his most famous characters, there is a large number. There are, of course, several cartoons, including some of those published in America in 1842 and 1868, whilst the inevitable advertiser is represented, portraits of Dickens being used in advertisements of various articles.

As stated at the beginning of this series, it was never hoped to do more than convey to our readers some idea of the comprehensive and exhaustive nature of the Kitton collection, and nothing now remains but to express the hope that this object has been achieved.

(*Concluded.*)

THE LATE MR. J. C. PARKINSON

ANOTHER link in the now small chain of Dickens's personal friends has gone in the death of Mr. J. C. Parkinson. He was one of the original Vice-Presidents of the Dickens Fellowship, already lessened by the deaths of Sir Henry Irving, J. L. Toole, Rev. Charles Clark, F. G. Kitton, and Clement Scott, and he was also one of the original members of the Boz Club, and one of the most interested members of both institutions.

In all the references to Mr. Parkinson's death he has been described as one of Dickens's "young men" on *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*, but we have failed to find his name in the contributors' book of the former, so that he must have used a *nom de plume* if he ever did contribute to it. When *Household Words* ceased, or, rather, was merged into *All the Year Round*, Mr. Parkinson was about twenty-five years of age. He was born in 1833, and at the age of twenty-two obtained a post at Somerset

House, and whilst there published his civil service guide entitled "Under Government," which ran through many editions. In 1860 he issued a handbook on Government Examinations, and in 1864 his connection with the *Daily News* commenced, which developed into his being a regular contributor to that paper on political and economic subjects. He was at this time associated with Dickens and *All the Year Round*, and continued a friend of the novelist to the end. He was one of the company at the farewell dinner given Dickens on November 2nd, 1867, prior to his departure for America, under the chairmanship of Lord Lytton and the secretaryship of Charles Kent. Dickens had a high opinion of Mr. Parkinson's work, and he expressed it in a letter to him written on Christmas Day, 1868. This letter was in answer to one from Mr. Parkinson asking Dickens to use his good services with Mr. Gladstone on his behalf, as he was anxious to secure the vacant post of Commissionership of Inland Revenue:

"In expressing my conviction," said Dickens, "that you deserve the place, and are in every way qualified for it, I found my testimony on as accurate a knowledge of your character and abilities as any one can possibly have acquired. In my editorship both of *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*, you know very well that I have invariably offered you those subjects of political and social interest to write upon, in which integrity, exactness, a remarkable power of generalising evidence and balancing facts, and a special clearness in stating the case, were indispensable on the part of the writer. My confidence in your powers has never been hasty or wrong. Whatever trust you have undertaken has been so completely discharged that it has become my habit to read your proofs rather for my own edification than (as in other cases) for the detection of some slip here or there, or the more pithy presentation of the subject."

Whether it was this letter which secured him the post or not, we cannot say; but no doubt it had much to do with it.

Mr. Parkinson played a prominent part in the movement to promote reform in workhouse infirmaries, which culminated in Mr. Gathorne Hardy's measure. In 1869 he visited Egypt as the guest of the Viceroy, and described for the *Daily News* the opening of the Suez Canal. He had large interests in the Galician oilfields, and was chairman of the Wankowa-Brelikow Company. He also visited India on a special mission for the telegraph authorities, and published an account of his visit under the title of "The Ocean Telegraph to India." He was an intimate friend of the late Edmund Yates, himself one of Dickens's "young men." When Yates died Mr. Parkinson was of great assistance to Mrs. Yates in her control of *The World*, to which paper he had been a frequent contributor from the first. He helped Yates to start it, and it was said he was to Yates what Forster was to Dickens.

The band of writers known as Dickens's "young men" has now, we believe, dwindled down to two—Mr. Percy Fitzgerald and Mr. Moy Thomas.

B. W. M.

A DICKENS BAZAAR

THE Dickens Bazaar to be held on December 2nd, at St. Bride's Institute, Bride Lane, Fleet Street, E.C., in aid of the charitable funds of the Fellowship, should attract not only good Dickensians, but all who interest themselves, however little, in the welfare of the poor of all ages and the needy. The Charitable and Needlework Guild do good work, and work which differs in very many particulars from that which most other charities perform. The Guild's work is a personal work, and those who have read Miss Miniken's report on what was done last year will agree that it is a work which merits the utmost support that can be given it.

We therefore appeal to all for help. Come yourselves and buy, and send your friends to buy, the presents you give at Christmas time. Much time and money have been spent by the organisers of the Bazaar, not only to make it attractive, but to stock the stalls with goods which intending visitors will find useful as Christmas and New Year presents. Above all, the articles for sale will not be marked with fancy figures.

The following is a list of the stalls and stallholders:—

"Variety," consisting of plain or fancy needlework, clothing, knick-knacks, &c. Miss Elliot, assisted by Mrs. Sidney Marriott and Miss Agnes Hughes.

"Dickensian," consisting of china, jewellery, postcards, calendars, &c. Miss Lilian Walford and Mr. C. Van Noorden, assisted by Miss Nonny Lock.

"Confectionery," consisting of toys, sweets, cakes, &c. Mrs. C. E. Edson, assisted by Mrs. Butt and the Misses Marriott.

"Books, Pictures, and Fancy Articles." Mrs. B. W. Matz and Mrs. E. Tomlin, assisted by Miss Matz and Miss May Rogers.

"Refreshments, Ices, and Fruit." Miss E. M. Miniken, assisted by Miss F. Wort, Miss L. Price, Miss Kitty Butt, Miss Winnie Price, Miss Violet Baker, and Miss Amy Gibbs.

"Flowers." Miss Clare Shirley, assisted by Miss Pearce and Miss Finch.

There will be much to interest by way of side-shows, under the direction of Mr. Frank Staff, who has devised many things to amuse. He is also in charge of an art exhibition which, we are assured, "is admitted by connoisseurs to be unrivalled."

There will also be competitions for ladies and also for gentlemen, for which valuable prizes will be given; Mr. George's shooting gallery, under the direction of Mr. Walter Dexter; a weighing machine under Mr. W. Miller; concert and recitals, and various other attempts, too numerous to mention here, to make the Bazaar pleasant as well as profitable.

A book souvenir, compiled by Mr. J. W. T. Ley, and fully illustrated, may be purchased from Miss Rosie Wort for sixpence.

The Bazaar will be opened at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, admission to which is one shilling: admission after 6 o'clock will be sixpence.

POETICAL TRIBUTES TO CHARLES DICKENS

XLVIII

A CHRISTMAS THOUGHT OF DICKENS

COME, pile the logs, for this is Christmas Night,
Spread wide the hearth for kin and friends and all.
Draw close the curtains, make things snug and bright,
While all without the soft, white snow-flakes fall.

Now, as we gather round the kindly hearth
And look for faces in the ruddy flame,
His face shines out, the man of honest mirth,
And, dear as household words, we breathe his name!

He taught: Not all of what the proud world recks
Is worth our praise, and humbly following him,
He showed us unregarded Trotty Vecks,
And that poor, lowly bed of Tiny Tim!

By night he took us 'neath the oil lamp's flare
Where to the crowd the glib-tongued Cheap Jack smiled,
To hide a hero's heart of brave despair,
While Death stepped on the cart and snatched his child!

Laughter he brought to the tired toiler's eyes,
In many a sprightly, gay and joyous scene,
And, that Christ's lowliest he did not despise,
Do Thou, O Lord, now keep his memory green!

LEICESTER ROMAYNE.

SHORT PLAYS FROM DICKENS*

MR. BROWNE has succeeded in filling what we are sure is a long-felt want in schools and small dramatic societies. His little book contains some twenty playettes from Dickens's works, that are timed for from twelve to twenty minutes. There are many Branches of the Fellowship and masters of schools, &c., who have from time to time written us asking for our advice in the selection of a scene or two from Dickens that will be suitable for "breaking-up" time or platform work, and we shall henceforward always be pleased to direct their attention to "Short Plays from Dickens."

What better scene than "The Friendly Waiter" for a boys' school, or "Miss Squeer's Tea Party" for girls, or mixed? Mr. Browne's selection is an admirable one. We should nevertheless have preferred to see more plays of one scene of fifteen minutes, instead of several plays with two or three different scenes, the whole playing only fifteen minutes. The adapter should have endeavoured to make *plays* from the book, not scenes: with a little

* "Short Plays from Dickens," for the use of Amateur School Dramatic Societies, arranged by Horace B. Browne, M.A. (Illustrated.) London: Chapman & Hall, Ltd. 2s. 6d. net.

ingenuity and a little licence (which Mr. Browne confesses he does not take), some really fine plays would have resulted. There is one play of three scenes in which the last scene, by the greatest stretch of the imagination, could not possibly play for more than thirty seconds. There seems so much time lost between the scenes. However, "Mr. George's Shooting Gallery," "Silas Wegg's Stall," and "The Strangers' Visit" are really good little plays, and we are glad to be introduced to them. "Mr. Guppy's Proposal" is also an amusing dialogue.

It is to be regretted, however, that a little more attention has not been given to the play as a play than to Dickens. The scenes are taken direct from the pages of the works as printed, and Dickens's descriptions are used as "stage directions." This will be found a little troublesome at times, but no doubt can be adjusted by the stage manager. In one case we read as a stage direction that "Tibbs chases small particles of salmon round and round his plate." How funny that is in the book; how absolutely impossible on the stage. Then, again, in the conversation between Sairey Gamp and Betsy Prig there are whole passages of action requiring some minutes to act in dumb show—and only really competent actors know how truly difficult acting dumb show is.

Mr. Browne prefaces his book with some hints as to scenery, dresses, &c., and the volume is illustrated in order further to help in these directions.

WALTER DEXTER.

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP

HERE, THERE, AND EVERYWHERE

NOTICE TO SECRETARIES.

Reports of meetings should reach the Editor by the 18*th of each month to ensure insertion. But it will be a matter of* GREAT CONVENIENCE *if Secretaries will send their reports immediately after the meetings have been held, and not wait until the time limit. Address c/o Publishers,* 11, *Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, W.C.*

HEADQUARTERS.—On November 4th Mr. H. Snowden Ward gave a lantern lecture at Essex Hall, Strand. It comprised a series of pictures relating to Dickens's life and works, upon which Mr. Ward made running comments. The slides, made from photographs by Mrs. Snowden Ward, were all of remarkable excellence, and Mr. Snowden Ward's lecture was of great interest, and was much appreciated by the audience.

BELFAST.—The second meeting was held on November 10th, in the Shaftesbury Café. Mr. Joseph R. Fisher, editor of the *Northern Whig*, presided. There was a very good attendance. The business of the evening was the election of office-bearers, and the following were duly elected:—President, Mr. Joseph R. Fisher, barrister-at-law; Vice-Presidents, Messrs. John Macarthur, J. E. Archibald, and E. J. Elliott; Committee, Messrs. R. W. R. Graham, R. G. Henderson, T. C. Hunter, W. G. Kennedy, B. J. N. Mann, John Shaw, James Shaw, James Seeds, James Williamson, and E. R. Jackson; Hon. Secretary and Treasurer, Mr. John S. B. Shaw.

BIRMINGHAM.—The second meeting of the session was held on

October 23rd, when Mr. H. K. Wright, President of the Plymouth Branch, gave an interesting lecture entitled "An Hour with Charles Dickens." Mr. Wright said the most outstanding characteristic of the great novelist was his broad, genial sympathy with life in all its phases, and particularly with those persons who were manfully toiling onward to a better day. His works were of world-wide repute, and his name would be dear to all English-speaking races long after this island had become a summer resort for the children of the Anglo-Saxon races which were being built up in various parts of the world.

BRIGHTON.—On November 7th a large number of members and friends met in the hall of the Y.M.C.A. to listen to a lecture by Mr. B. W. Matz on "The Newly Discovered Writings of Dickens." Mr. Henry Davey presided.

BRIXTON.—On November 16th Mr. F. J. Gauntlett, the Hon. Secretary of the Brighton Branch, gave a series of recitals in the lecture hall of the Brixton Independent Church. We believe this is Mr. Gauntlett's first recital in London, and much interest was evinced in his performance. His selection of pieces was varied, and included "Mr. Chester's Views on Marriage," "Retribution" (*Dombey and Son*), "The Inquest" (*Bleak House*), "Mr. Mould at Home," "Interview with Ralph Nickleby," and "The Vigil of Miggs." All of these pieces were rendered by Mr. Gauntlett with a great deal of feeling and emphasis. In certain of them he was stronger than in others, as is to be expected in such a wide range. In such pieces as "Retribution" and "The Inquest" his pathos was very marked, whilst in the Mrs. Gamp scene and "The Vigil of Miggs" he scored a great success. During the evening piano recitals by Miss Cobeldick and songs by Mr. F. Breeze added to the enjoyment of the evening. Mr. Sidney Marriott was the chairman.

CHESTER, U.S.A.—The Branch is in a prosperous condition, numbering about sixty members, all good Dickensians. At the first meeting of the season, October 8th, Rev. Mr. Towle outlined the winter's work, dividing *A Tale of Two Cities* into equal parts for each evening's study and discussion.

At the second meeting, October 22nd, Rev. Mr. Towle gave a fine paper on the state of England at the time of the French Revolution, as a preparation for the opening chapters of the book to be read. The annual election was held. Rev. Mr. Towle, the first President, who has been absent two years, was elected unanimously as President; Mr. James McMorran was elected Vice-President; Miss M. C. O'Neill, organiser of the Branch, and Secretary since its organisation, January 4th, 1904, declined re-election; Miss E. T. Smith was elected Secretary; Miss W. W. McDowell, Corresponding Secretary; and Miss K. Stevenson, Treasurer. The Branch expects to do some good work in the line of charity this coming winter.

DUBLIN.—On October 22nd a varied programme of recitals and music was presented in the Sackville Café, and an appeal was made for funds to provide a Christmas dinner to the city newsboys, and a New Year's entertainment to the adult poor.

There was a large attendance at the meeting on Thursday, November 12th. The subject chosen was *A Tale of Two Cities*. Mr. George A. Young, who occupied the chair, read a paper, which dealt with the work in a most comprehensive manner. Among those who spoke to the subject were—Mrs. Montgomery, Miss Steele, Mr. M. D. Collins, and Mr. D. Swaine. Mr. Collins gave an admirable reading of the final scene in Sydney Carton's sacrifice. A feature of the evening was a special paper on *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, contributed by Mr. W. J. Preston (Hon. Assistant

Secretary), being a reply to the recent discourse given on this subject by Mr. J. Shaw. Mr. Preston's paper was well received, and initiated a keen discussion in which a great many of those present participated. During the evening several musical items were excellently rendered by Mrs. Stephen Joyce and Mr. Pemberton.

FOREST GATE.—On November 12th the usual monthly meeting was held in the Earlham Hall, the chairman for the evening being Mr. A. A. Banes. Mr. Snowden Ward gave a lantern lecture, "The Real Dickens Land," and a large and appreciative audience followed every word with the closest attention, their enthusiastic applause at intervals testifying their interest in the pictures and lecture. Seven new members were enrolled. It is contemplated holding an informal supper and party at the "George and Vulture," Lombard Street, on January 7th, 1909, further particulars of which will be announced. A small needlework party is now in active operation making garments for the poorest tiny tots of the district, which garments will be distributed in the early part of December. The next meeting of the Branch is on December 10th—the annual social—and a cordial invitation is here given to all members of London Branches who happen to be in the neighbourhood of Forest Gate on that evening.

GLOUCESTER.—The second meeting was held on November 11th, at Northgate Mansions. Mr. H. Godwin Chance, the President, opened the meeting with a few remarks on *Nicholas Nickleby*. Mr. Roland Austin treated the book from a bibliographical point of view, and two readings were given by Mr. John W. Barnett. Messrs. F. H. Bretherton, W. Jückes, W. R. Voller, A. W. Beale, R. Austin, H. Spender, and H. Godwin Chance took part in the general discussion which followed, in course of which some interesting points were brought out. Reference was made to the interesting fact that another member of the Branch had been elected Mayor of Gloucester in the person of Mr. James Bruton.

HASTINGS.—The fifth annual meeting was held at the Queen's Hotel on October 29th. Major Vipan, D.S.O., presided. The secretarial report showed the membership to be 250. They had had eight meetings during the past session, all of which had been successful. The balance-sheet, presented by the Treasurer (Mr. F. W. Tyler) showed a balance in hand. Major Vipan was re-elected President, as were the Vice-Presidents. Mr. W. Hoad (the Hon. Secretary) and Mr. F. W. Tyler (the Hon. Treasurer) were re-elected. Miss Elsie Tyler was made Assistant Treasurer. Miss Chesterton gave several acceptable solos. Mr. Lou King provided some first-class lightning sketches of Dickens' Characters, and Mr. H. King provoked much laughter by his able readings from Dickens's works. Mrs. Skinner proved an efficient pianist.

HULL.—On October 30th, a debate entitled "Was Dickens Fair to Women?" was conducted in splendid spirit. Mr. J. H. Noble opened the debate, and based his arguments on the admirable domestic characters Dickens had portrayed. Miss A. Hall led the opposing side, and held that Dickens's treatment of woman was totally inadequate; in many cases he did not do justice either to women's common sense or intellectual capabilities. A number of the members kept up a good debate, and at the close a vote was taken, which resulted in a majority for the negative side of the question. Mr. H. B. Browne occupied the chair.

At the meeting on November 13th, Guardian W. H. Eastman took as his subject "Child Characters in Dickens." The lecturer pointed out that Dickens looked upon little children as something inexpressibly great. Dickens had imparted a new sacredness to childhood; he had gone into workhouses, and where others saw only parish brats Dickens

had seen the countenance of thoughtful boyhood; he had picked up the dross and made it shine like pure gold. Dickens's genius was a great privilege, but Dickens had used his privilege wisely and well. A recitation from *Bleak House* was given by Miss Blanche Watson, and illustrative readings were contributed by Miss Gertrude Watson and Mr. G. E. Tindal.

LIVERPOOL.—The third meeting of this session was held at the Royal Institution, Colquitt Street, on November 3rd. The President, Mr. Edgar Browne, F.R.C.S., took the chair. The lecturer, Mr. Cuming Walters, received a hearty welcome from a crowded audience. His lecture was entitled "The Development of the Heroine in Dickens's Novels." After drawing a comparison between Fielding and Dickens, the lecturer referred to the latter's love of the grotesque, and instanced several well-known Dickens characters. After tracing the development of Dickens's heroines, Mr. Cuming Walters pointed out that they are lovable on account of the interest they inspire, and the practical service to their fellow-beings which they render, as instanced in the person of Agnes in *David Copperfield*, and Lizzie Hexam in *Our Mutual Friend*.

LUDDENDEN.—The monthly meeting was held on October 27th, in the Warley Schoolroom. Mr. J. Schofield presided. *Pickwick Papers* is to be the book for studying during the session. Mr. H. W. Harwood was the speaker. Dealing with the topic, "The Uniqueness of *Pickwick*," he showed that it was unique because of its great collection of characters, which moved across the pages as in a bioscopic entertainment; and because of its isolated position in literature, there being no other creation like it. Dickens was compared with other humorists, and it was shown that his humour, particularly in *Pickwick*, was of a light, gossipy, running-sketch sort of humour, touching only the surface of characters. The essayist said that Dickens did not probe into the souls of his characters in *Pickwick*, but lightly sketched their appearances and actions, and dashed on from one to another, and did not lose himself in the maze. The humour was created by a running caricature and by a minuteness of description. Instances of humour were read, after which the members had a "round-table talk."

MAIDSTONE.—The first meeting was held at the Church Institute last month, when the President, Alderman Vaughan, J.P., took the chair. Mr. Edwin Harris, of Rochester, delivered an interesting lecture on Rochester in the time of Dickens, and as he spoke from personal reminiscences the audience was kept in a state of rapt attention, interspersed with periods of uncontrollable mirth, for a space of an hour and a half. At the close of the lecture the Chairman, on behalf of the branch, presented Mr. Harris with a polished oak smoker's cabinet in recognition of his services, both at Maidstone and Rochester last season.

MANCHESTER.—On November 6th. Rev. G. A. Payne read an interesting paper on "Mrs. Gaskell's Literary Associations with Charles Dickens," quoting from several of the many letters that passed between the two authors. Dickens showed his appreciation of Mrs. Gaskell's literary powers in many ways, notably when he wrote to her with a view to enlisting her services for *Household Words*. In the discussion which followed the reading of the paper, Mr. John Harwood (the Chairman), as well as Mr. J. J. Gleave and Mr. W. H. Vaughan, took part. Several new members were enrolled.

PHILADELPHIA, U.S.A.—The fall and winter meetings of the Philadelphia Branch opened on October 14th at the Hotel Majestic with a large attendance. The President, Mr. John Thomson, occupied the chair.

The programme began with an admirable paper on "Dickens's Bookkeepers and Clerks," by Mr. C. J. Lippmann. Mr. Charles Sessler gave a most entertaining account of his visit to Broadstairs last summer at the unveiling of the tablets in memory of Dickens. This was followed by Dr. Henry Leffmann's excellent paper on "An Abstract of a Recent French Criticism of Dickens." The final number was a reading by J. K. Thompson: "Sam Weller Writes a Valentine."

One of the most enjoyable meetings in the history of this Branch was that held on November 11th, at the Hotel Walton. The programme opened with a reading of George Gissing's "The Humour of Dickens," by Miss Curtis Wager-Smith. Miss Charlotte Sessler gave a charming piano solo, which deservedly received an encore. A symposium followed on "The Most Humorous Situation in Dickens." Mrs. T. O. Woodward selected "Bob Sawyer's Party"; Mr. J. K. Thompson, "The Quarrel between Betsy Prig and Mrs. Gamp"; Mrs. Charles P. Henry, "The Golden Dustman falls into Bad Company"; Miss M. C. O'Neill, "Mr. Pickwick in pursuit of his Hat"; and Mr. Leigh Mitchell Hodges, "An Adventure with a Lady in Yellow Curl-papers." The meeting closed with two delightful baritone solos by Dr. S. H. Lipschutz.

PLYMOUTH.—The Branch met in Bank Street Chambers on November 10th. The society is arousing such enthusiasm that it has had to take a larger room for the meetings. The President (Mr. W. H. K. Wright) was in the chair. Mr. W. C. Spear read a paper on *David Copperfield*, which was greatly appreciated. The following ladies and gentlemen gave descriptive readings from the work, illustrating the characters mentioned in the paper:—Mr. Rugg Monk, J.P., Mr. G. W. Wherry, Mr. Vernon, Mr. J. Carkeet, Mrs. W. H. K. Wright, Mrs. Stockwell, Mrs. Wagstaff, L.L.A., Mr. W. Felce, Mr. R. Hockridge, Mr. C. Quain (Hon. Secretary), and Mr. W. H. K. Wright (President). Mr. F. Yoxall, Hon. Secretary, Birmingham Branch, addressed the meeting, and urged the members to remember that they belonged to a "Fellowship" which had for its object relieving of the poor and oppressed.

SOUTHAMPTON.—On November 16th an excellent programme was submitted, the chief event being the delightful paper by the Rev. W. A. C. Chevalier, "Charles Dickens, the Apostle of Christmas." Mr. A. H. Thornback gave a reading, "David Copperfield and the Waiter." Musical items were well rendered by Mr. R. Grimson, Mrs. Edwards, Miss E. Child and Miss Gadd. A most enjoyable and successful whist drive, arranged by Mrs. Keene and other Dickensians, was held during the month in connection with the Branch, and was patronised by about 125 members.

TORONTO.—The reorganisation meeting for the season of 1908-9 took place on Tuesday, October 6th, at the Assembly Hall of the Temple Building. There was a large attendance of members and friends. After an informal dinner, the following officers were elected:—Hon. President, Prof. Goldwin Smith; President, E. S. Williamson; Vice-Presidents, Mrs. Jean Blewett, F. M. Bell-Smith, J. W. Bengough, A. M. Denovan, J. B. Harris; Hon. Secretary, Miss M. Pennell; Hon. Treasurer, F. W. Hayden; Council, Miss Standish, Miss Shuttleworth, Mrs. Stafford, W. C. Cain, E. J. B. Duncan, and H. M. Tedman. The re-election of the President and Secretary was unanimous and enthusiastic, no other names being suggested. The after-dinner programme was excellent, and set a high standard for the season's meetings. Mr. Bell-Smith gave a brief account of his recent visit to Dickens-Land. Mr. Milton Lee, in a selection from the *Pickwick Papers*, took his old character of Sam Weller admirably. Miss Winifred Parker recited "The Courtship of Mr. Barkis" in an artistic and convincing manner. Mrs. Blewett read an original contribution in verse.

WEST LONDON.—The annual meeting was held on October 29th, at the Ealing Town Hall. The annual report shows the membership of the Branch to be 112, as against 73 the previous year. Attention was called to the guinea prize, offered by the President (Mr. Jacobs) for the best-delivered and original paper on Dickens or any of his works or characters. Reference was also made to the recently formed dramatic club, of which Mr. Langton Johnson is stage manager. On the proposition of Mr. Jacobs, seconded by Mr. Hilton, the report and balance-sheet were adopted. The officers and committee were re-elected for the ensuing year. After the business had been despatched, the President gave a reading from *David Copperfield*; Master Eric Stroud followed with a recitation from *Mrs. Lirriper's Lodgings*, which he gave with remarkable intelligence; Miss Buck cleverly rendered David's proposal and first quarrel with Dora; Miss Jeffcoat's recitation from *Barnaby Rudge* was capital; and Miss Watson very charmingly recited "The Journey of Life."

GLASGOW DICKENS SOCIETY.—During the month two meetings were held on November 4th and 11th, respectively. The former was devoted to a paper by Mr. Douglas Parker on "Local Associations with Dickens," in which he dealt with the novelist's visits to Glasgow on his reading tours in 1858, 1861, 1866, and 1869. Mr. Parker also gave an account of Dickens's visit to the city in 1847, when he delivered an address at the opening ceremony of the Glasgow Athenæum, and of his return visit in 1848, when he appeared at the Theatre Royal to support the fund for the Shakespeare Memorial at Stratford-on-Avon.

On November 11th three papers were read: One by Mr. Archibald Freeland on "Dickens and Dolby," reviewing the relationship between the two men and the success of the reading tours under the latter's management; another by Mr. Mackay on "Some Shrews portrayed by Dickens," which considered such characters as Mrs. Gargery, Mrs. Marigold, Mrs. Varden, Mrs. Snagsby, Mrs. Weller, Mrs. Bumble, and Mrs. Gamp; and the third was entitled "Some Dickens Characters, with Dramatic Illustrations," in which Mr. Victor Maclure spoke of the technique of acting and the actability of Dickens's plays generally. The large audience gave marked evidence of its appreciation of the excellence of the three papers. Mr. John D. Parker, Vice-President, occupied the chair on each occasion.

DICKENSIANA MONTH BY MONTH

BOOKS.

Short Plays from Dickens. By H. B. Browne, M.A. Illus. Crown 8vo. London: Chapman & Hall, Ltd. 2s. 6d. net.

Charles Dickens and His Friends. By W. Teignmouth Shore. Illus. Parts I. and II. London: Sisley, Ltd. 6d. net, each.

The Dickens Birthday Book, with six illustrations in colour by Fletcher Watson and a portrait. London: Raphael Tuck & Sons. 1s. net, cloth; 2s. 6d. net, leather.

MAGAZINE AND NEWSPAPER ARTICLES.

"The Genius of Dickens," by George Barlow. *Contemporary Review*, November.

"Scott and Dickens: a Comparison." *Glasgow Herald*, October 22nd.

"The Dora of David Copperfield." *Pall Mall Gazette*, October 23rd.

"Charles Dickens," by John T. Page. *East London Advertiser*, November 7th and 14th.

"Mr. Pickwick on the Ice," and "Bob Cratchitt's Christmas Dinner." Coloured plates in *Black and White* Christmas Number.

"Charles Dickens's famous story, 'The Mystery of Edwin Drood.'" *Tit Bits*, November 7th.

"The Handsome Genius as a Husband," by Wilfrid Mason. Illus. *Royal Magazine*, November.

"Dickens in Paris." *T.P.'s Christmas Number.*

"The Boyhood of Boz." *Louth Advertiser*, November 21st.

DIARY OF DICKENS MEETINGS

DECEMBER

1. Liverpool Branch: Members' Evening, at Royal Institution, at 8.
   Brixton Branch: Whist Drive, at Raleigh Hall, at 8.
2. Charitable and Needlework Guild: Annual Bazaar, at St. Bride's Institute, E.C. (See "When Found——.")
   Gloucester Branch: Monthly Meeting.
   Glasgow Dickens Society: Dickens Recital by Mr. J. Wallace Coles, at Masonic Hall, at 8.
3. Rochester Branch: Lecture by Mr. G. K. Chesterton, at Bull Hotel, at 8.
   Sheffield Branch: Recital, "Gems from Dickens," by Mr. Frank Speaight, at Montgomery Hall, Surrey Street, at 8.
   Halifax Branch: Dickens Recitals by Miss Helen Brinckman, at 8.
4. Manchester Branch: "Juvenile Portraits from the Dickens Gallery," by Mr. R. Bagot, at Onward Hall, at 8.
5. Brighton Branch: Recital-Lecture, "Dickens in Boz," by Rev. Jos. Gay, at Steine House, Old Steine, at 8.
8. Shrewsbury Branch: Monthly Meeting, at Alkmund's Rooms, at 8.
9. Bristol and Clifton Dickens Society (affiliated): "Child Life in Dickens-Land," arranged by Miss Tarr, at Whatley Hall, Redland, at 8.
   Brixton Branch: The "Little Dorrit" Society's Sale of Work, in Ladies' Parlour, Brixton Independent Church, at 3.30. Recitals, refreshments.
10. Dublin Branch: Public Recital in aid of Charitable Fund, at Gresham Hotel, at 8. Chairman, Sir Chas. A. Cameron, C.B.
    Chesterfield Branch: Readings from *American Notes*, with lantern illustrations, by Mr. J. Philpott, at Trinity Institution, at 8.
    Forest Gate Branch: Annual Social, at Earlham Hall, at 8.
11. Birmingham Branch: Poor Children's Treat.
    Hull Branch: Whist Drive, at Shakespeare Hall, at 8.
14. Brixton Branch: Reading of *The Battle of Life*, by Mr. R. Allbut, at Brixton Independent Church, at 8.
15. Liverpool Branch: Lecture by Rev. J. Collins Odgers, B.A., on the "Instruction of 'Ptah Ho Tep,'" at Royal Institution, at 8.
17. Dublin Branch: Whist Drive, at Sackville Café, at 8.
    Stockport Branch: Lantern Lecture, "Dickens as a Social Reformer," by Mr. G. Helm, at Sunday School, at 8.
18. West London Branch: Dickens Recitals, &c., by Mr. S. Langton Johnson and Company, at Town Hall, Ealing, at 8.
21. Southampton Branch: Readings by Members, at St. Paul's Parish Room, Bedford Place, at 8.
    Brixton Branch: Whist Drive, at Raleigh Hall, Effra Rd., at 8.
22. Plymouth Branch: Christmas Readings, by Mr. W. H. K. Wright, Mr. C. W. Bracken, and others, at Public Library, at 8.
    Cripplegate Theatre, E.C.: Performance of "Dot," at 8 p.m. (See "When Found——.")
23. Glasgow Dickens Society: Christmas Entertainment to Poor Children.